

REMARKS

Entrance of this amendment prior to examination is respectfully requested. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1, 8-10, 17-20, 23-24, 28-33 and 35-105 are pending.

Claims 30-32 have been amended to correct clear typographical errors without an intent to alter the scope of those claims. In a prior preliminary amendment, arguments for the allowability of the then pending claims 1, 8-10, 17-20, 23-24, 28-33 and 35-39 were submitted. The present amendment does not alter those arguments. It is respectfully submitted that claims 40-105 submitted as new claims herein are allowable as being fully supported by the specification as originally filed, and as being patentable over the prior art references of record, for at least the reasons explained herein.

Support in Specification

Generally, all claim limitations are supported by the specification as originally filed. Applicants provide some exemplary citations for certain claim limitations. For the sake of brevity, not all citations are necessarily provided, nor are all claim limitations discussed.

For example, invocation logic is supported at least by page 3, lines 15-16, 23-24 of the specification as filed, page 8, line 34 to page 9, line 1 of the specification as filed, page 9, lines 7-8 of the specification as filed, page 10, lines 5-8, page 16, lines 16-18 of the specification as filed, and item S11 in Fig. 4.

Logic for causing data used to initiate joining a game to be provided to an inviter messenger client finds support at least in Fig. 4 (items S5, S6) and page 10, lines 1-3 of the specification as filed.

Logic for validating a potential game as legitimate finds support at least at page 11, lines 17-20, and page 15, lines 21-23.

Logic for generating usage information is supported at least at page 15, line 32 to page 16, line 15.

Support for other claim limitations should similarly be readily apparent from the specification. The above references to the specification, including the figures, are merely

examples of support in specific embodiments and are not intended to constrain or define claim elements.

Distinctions over the Cited References

Neither Bunney (U.S. Patent No. 6,466,969) alone nor in combination with James (U.S. Patent No. 6,179,713) discloses or suggests any of the inventions as recited in the pending claims. In particular, Applicants note that Bunney states: “A predefined action is associated by a notification server (29) with a notification. . . . The predefined action associated with the notification sent to the user terminal (3) is activated automatically by a response to the displayed notification at the user terminal (3)” Abstract (emphasis added). In contrast, according to the present invention, the data for initiating the action of joining a game is provided by an inviter client.

For example, the references do not disclose or suggest initiating joining by an invitee game client to an active game that is hosted by a game server and to which an inviter game client is joined, the invitee client including an invitee messenger client for receiving in at least one message from an inviter messenger client data used to initiate joining a game, wherein initiating joining to the active game includes: invoking the invitee game client using the data; and connecting the invitee game client to the game server using the data, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server and a reference to the active game, the inviter and invitee game clients being respectively associated with the inviter and invitee messenger clients. (See, e.g., independent claims 40, 52, 64.)

Moreover, the references do not disclose or suggest, at an inviter client, causing data used to initiate joining a game to be provided to an inviter messenger client for inclusion in at least one message to be sent over a network to an invitee messenger client, wherein the data enables an invitee game client associated with the invitee messenger client to initiate joining an active game to which an inviter game client is joined. (See, e.g., independent claims 78, 86, 96.)

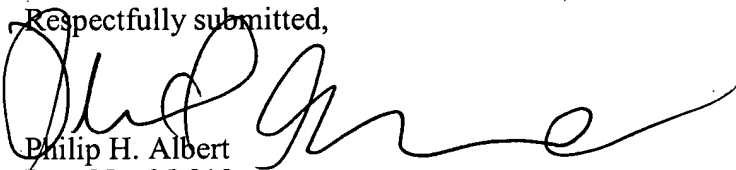
CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the independent claims and the claims dependent thereon are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,

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